

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT ISLAMABAD SENT SECSTATE INFO NEW DELHI KABUL
TEHRAN MOSCOW PEKING LONDON DATED JULY 19.

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IN, AF, IN, UR, CH

SUBJ: AZIZ AHMED DEFINES GOP FOREIGN POLICY

SUMMARY: MINSTATE AZIZ AHMED, IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE,
CLAIMED GOP HAD EVIDENCE OF INDIAN TROOP MOVEMENTS ON BORDER
BUT HAD NOT ASCERTAINED PURPOSE. HE DENIED OPPOSITION
CHARGES GOP HAD NO FRIENDS ABROAD, CITING EXCELLENT RELATIONS
WITH FRENCH AND BRITISH. RELATIONS WITH SOVIETS "NOT AS GOOD AS
SHOULD BE" BUT HE HOPED THEY WOULD IMPROVE. WITH REGARD
US, MINSTATE QUOTED FROM PRESIDENT NIXON'S LETTER TO BHUTTO
TO EFFECT PAK INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE WAS "CORNERSTONE"
US POLICY. HE AFFIRMED PAK WILLINGNESS RESUME DIALOGUE
WITH INDIA IF "CERTAIN ASSURANCES" GIVENG. HE CASTIGATED
AFGHAN INTERFERENCE IN PAKISTAN'S AFFAIRS BUT EXPRESSED
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HOPE FOR BETTER RELATIONS. END SUMMARY

1. MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AZZIZ AHMED, DISCUSSED PAKISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORS AND MAJOR POWERS JULY 18 IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DISCUSSION OF "THE MASSING OF INDIAN AND AFGHAN TROOPS ON PAKISTAN'S BORDERS" HELD AT OPPOSITION REQUEST. HE DENIED OPPOSITION CHARGES THAT "CRISIS" HAD BEEN MANUFACTURED TO DIVERT PEOPLES' ATTENTION FROM INTERNAL PROBLEMS. GOP HAD "CONCRETE EVIDENCE" OF TROOP MOVEMENTS AT THE BORDERS, HE DECLARED, BUT HAD NOT COME TO A "DEFINITE CONCLUSION" AS TO THEIR PURPOSE. HE CLAIMED THAT GOP HAD GIVEN INDIANS ADVANCE INFORMATION BY "HOT LINE" OF MOVEMENT OF PAKISTANI TROOPS TO BORDER TO PREVENT SMUGGLING. NONETHELESS, HE SAID, INDIA HAD REACTED BY PUTTING ADDITIONAL FORCES IN KASHMIR. WHAT MOST CONCERNED PAKISTAN, HE SAID, IS THAT "WE SEE A PATTERN" IN DEVELOPMENTS SINCE MAY 18 INDIAN NUCLEAR TEST.

2. REPLYING TO OPPOSITION CHARGES THAT GOVERNMENT HAD NO FRIENDS ABROAD, AZIZ AHMED CITED ISLAMIC SUMMIT AND KUALA LUMPUR RESOLUTION ON INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION. TURNING TO MAJOR POWERS, HE SAID RELATIONS WITH FRANCE AND BRITAIN WERE EXCELLENT. "IN FACT, THE FRENCH ARE COLLABORATING WITH US IN A NUMBER OF DEFENSE PROJECTS." RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION "ARE GOOD BUT NOT AS GOOD AS IT SHOULD BE (SIC)" AND HE HOPED THAT THEY WILL BECOME "BETTER AND FRIENDLIER." PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES IN JUNE 24 LETTER TO BHUTTO HAD REITERATED THAT PAKISTAN'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE WAS "CORNERSTONE" OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY, MINISTER SAID. CHINA HAD ALSO RECENTLY REAFFIRMED HER SUPPORT TO PAKISTAN. CONCERNING NEIGHBORS, AHMED SAID SHAH OF IRAN HAD DECLARED THAT "IN THE EVENT OF AGGRESSION, HIS COUNTRY WILL MILITARILY INTERVENE ON THE SIDE OF PAKISTAN."

3. MINSTATE THEN SAID THAT PAKISTAN WAS PREPARED TO RESUME DIALOGUE WITH INDIA "PROVIDED CERTAIN ASSURANCES WERE GIVEN." THESE INCLUDED EXPLANATION AS TO PRECISE PURPOSE OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSION, REAFFIRMATION OF SIMAL COMMITMENT TO SOLVE DISPUTES WITHOUT USE OR THREAT OF FORCE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND GOI COMMITMENT TO TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF PAKISTAN.

4. MINISTER DECLARED THAT "PAKISTAN MUST HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN" AND WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK FOR FRIENDLY AND BROTHERLY TIES. HE PROTESTED, HOWEVER, THAT AFGHAN CLAIMS NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE AND BALUCHISTAN WERE "OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WHICH SHOULD BE

RETURNED TO THE MOTHERLAND" WERE "BLATANT, SHAMELESS AND PROVOCATIVE INTERFERENCE IN PAKISTAN'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS". DESPITE THIS, HE HOPED KABUL WOULD REALIZE THAT FRIENDSHIP WOULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL.

5. OPPOSITION SPEAKERS WERE CRITICAL OF PRIME MIN FOR NOT ATTENDING DEBATE AND CHARACTERIZED HIS HANDLING OF CRISIS AS PROVOCATIVE. IF CRISIS WERE REAL, ARGUED NAP'S WALI KHAN AND TEHRIK'S MIAN MAHMUD ALI KASURI, PRIME MIN SHOULD HAVE CALLED SPECIAL SESSION OF ASSEMBLY. HIS ACTIVITIES HAD CAUSED CREDIBILITY GAP AND LENT CREDENCE TO VIEW THAT GOP WAS "CRYING WOLF".

6. COMMENT: WHILE GOP'S RECENT PUBLIC CHARGES THAT INDIANS AND AFGHANS WERE MASSING TROOPS ALONG BORDERS CREATED GOOD DEAL OF CONCERN HERE, OPPOSITION IS CORRECT IN CHARGING THAT HANDLING OF MATTER HAS LEFT DOUBT IN MANY MINDS. AZIZ AHMED'S GENERALLY TEMPERATE REMARKS SHOULD BE REASSURING IN THIS REGARD, AND MAY MARK WINDING DOWN OF PRESENT MINI-CRISIS. NOTABLE THAT HE REPEATED AND EMBELLISHED ON BHUTTO'S EARLIER STATEMENT THAT GOP WAS INTERESTED IN REOPENING DIALOGUE WITH INDIA, ALTHOUGH WELL HEDGED WITH CONDITIONS. HIS TREATMENT OF AFGHANISTAN, CONSIDERABLY MORE MODERATE THAN BHUTTO'S RECENT SPEECHES IN FRONTIER, STILL CARRIED WARNING REGARDING INTERNAL INTERFERENCE.
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